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Report of Committee on Rainsford Island -
- 1835 -

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FROM

James R. Balkwill

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HOUSE....No. 35.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

House of Representatives, Jan. 28, 1835.

Ordered, That Messrs. Thayer of *Braintree*, Gurney of *Boston*, and Billings of *Conway*, be a Committee to ascertain, if any, and what repairs are necessary, for the better preservation (from the ravages of the seas,) of Rainsford Island in the harbor of Boston: with leave to report by bill or otherwise.

L. S. CUSHING, *Clerk.*

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James R. Baldwin
North Andover, Mass.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty-Five.

RESOLVE

For defraying the Expense of protecting Rainsford Island from the ravages of the Sea.

Resolved, That the sum of four thousand and five hundred dollars, be and the same hereby is, appropriated to defray the expense of protecting Rainsford Island in the harbor of Boston, from the ravages of the Sea, and his Excellency the Governor, with advice of the Council, is hereby authorized to draw his warrant on the Treasurer for the same, in such sums, and at such times, as the service may require, in favor of the Agent who may superintend the same.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Committee appointed upon the order of the 28th ult., to ascertain if any, and what repairs are necessary to protect Rainsford Island from the ravages of the Sea, have attended that service, and

REPORT,

That they have been to the Island, and examined it; that it is situated in the harbor of Boston, at a distance of about seven miles from the City, that it contains about eleven acres of land, including the beach.

That there is one large and commodious dwelling-house occupied by the Keeper of the Island; a neat and convenient Cottage improved by the resident Physician, one large and spacious building, as the principal Hospital. Also one other building used as an Auxiliary to the same, together with a number of stores and out buildings, as per memorandum marked (A.)

About three fourths of the land is occupied by the said buildings, and improved for a burial ground, for walks and avenues; the residue is improved for Horticultural purposes; and is that part of the Island most exposed to damage.

That for a distance of about seventy-five rods round the east part, it has been greatly damaged by the sea, and from appearance that part has been washed away to the extent of more than twenty rods.

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It appears there was formerly a sea wall, laid to prevent the bank from wasting, but either from a fault in laying, or from the effect of a violent and extraordinary storm, the sea has broken over and entirely destroyed it.

Your Committee would here observe, that there are advantages peculiar to this Island, in regard to the quality of the water; there are three wells, and several springs remarkably good, both for drink and family uses, a circumstance hardly to be expected, and seldom realized on an Island of this limited dimension; and so very essential for the convenience and accommodation of an institution of this kind.

Your Committee was highly gratified to find that the Hospital, and all the other buildings were in very excellent repair; and that the arrangements and management in every particular, was such as gave entire satisfaction, and very far exceeded their most sanguine expectations.

There is a resident Physician of eminent acquirements, and great experience always in attendance, the Keeper of the Island and his family are peculiarly qualified for their station; all of which your Committee think highly honourable to those who have the same under their immediate care. Taking into consideration, the great advantage swhich are derived from this Island, and the circumstance of its being the only one in this harbour, which is owned by the Commonwealth, your Committee are unanimously of opinion, that the preservation of the entire land is extremely important to the interests of the Commonwealth.

They would further observe, that by judging from past events, they feel confident that the whole of that part on which the houses occupied by the Physician, and the Keeper, and the land improved for Horticultural pur-

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poses, (being about four acres,) will soon be washed away, unless protected by a suitable and well constructed stone wall; they are led more fully in this belief, from the circumstance, that an Island situated a little to the eastward of this, (commonly called Nix's mate,) which within the recollection of some of your Committee, was improved for pasturing of cattle and sheep, is now entirely destroyed, and nothing remains now to be seen but barren rocks (at low water,) and a monument of stone erected as a beacon to warn the faithful mariner from a too near approach.

The bank in rear of the Physician's house, is fifty feet high, the house stands within twenty-eight feet from the brink, and this is the part which is most rapidly wasting away.

The average height of the bank where it is necessary to be secured is about thirty feet from the water.

Your Committee would further state, that they have obtained (from the city authority,) a detailed account of the actual receipts and expenditures, which have been made during the last eleven years, in regard to the quarantine department, and including the amount of building the Hospital, more than what was allowed by the Commonwealth, which amounts to $23,707 96, which account is marked (B,) and is here annexed.

From the above considerations, your Committee would recommend that the south-east and easterly part of Rainsford Island should be protected by a good substantial stone wall, to be constructed and built by a suitable agent, to be chosen by the Legislature; that the said agent should give suitable bonds to the Treasurer of this Commonwealth, for the faithful performance of the trust; and from the best information which could possibly be

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obtained the expense of securing the Island from the damages of the sea, in the best and most economical manner, will amount to a sum of not less than $4,500. They therefore recommend the passage of the accompanying Resolve. All which is respectfully submitted.

Per order of Committee,

MINOTT THAYER, *Chairman.*

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[A.]

Memorandum of the Property on Rainsford Island. The Buildings, and their dimensions.

First. One large building, improved as the principal hospital. Dimensions, sixty by thirty four feet, three stories high. The basement story contains one large hall, seven rooms, two ventilators, two water closets and two copper pumps, one for well and the other for rain water, with four stacks of chimneys. First story: one hall containing five wards and two water closets. Second story: one hall, containing one parlor, four wards, and two water closets. Third story: one large room extending over the whole building, for drying clothes and other necessary purposes. The whole building surrounded by a double portico, eight feet wide, supported by twenty four columns, of sixteen feet high, making the whole building seventy four by fifty feet.

Second. One large building, one hundred and six feet long by eighteen feet wide, with piazza in front, six feet wide, containing eight wards, used as a fever hospital.

Third. Old small pox hospital, sixty, by sixteen feet, containing three wards, platform in front six feet wide.

Fourth. Island-keepers house, in form of an L, south wing fifty seven feet six inches by eighteen feet six inches, containing nine rooms, two stacks chimneys, two stories high. West wing, sixty two by eighteen feet, two stories high, containing one large hall, and eight

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rooms, one stack of chimneys, one portico, fifty seven by seven feet. One addition, fifty seven by eleven feet, one stack of chimneys, and four rooms. The whole building contains twenty one rooms.

Fifth. Resident physician's cottage, thirty feet long, ten feet of which is twenty feet wide, and twenty feet thirty two feet wide, with two wings; first wing twelve by twelve feet, second wing twelve by fourteen feet, containing eight rooms, cellar, and one stack of chimneys, two iron pumps, one for well and the other for rain water.

Sixth. One wood house and other out buildings, for the resident physicians convenience.

Seventh. Boatman's house, twenty two by sixteen feet. Basement story, one room. First story, two rooms. Second story, three rooms; double portico in front four feet wide, with wood house, &c.

Ninth. One large store, one hundred and fifty feet by thirty one feet, divided into five apartments.

Tenth. One store, sixty feet by twenty two feet.

Eleventh. One store, seventy five by twenty feet.

Twelfth. Wash house for island keeper, sixty by thirty two feet, one stack chimneys, and three rooms.

Thirteenth. One barn for Island keeper, thirty by eighteen feet, one shed adjoining, thirty two by twelve feet.

Fourteenth. One smoke house, twelve by ten feet.

Fifteenth. One bathing house, twenty two by nine feet, and other necessary out buildings.

Sixteenth. T wharf at the west head of the island, two hundred and ninety six feet long, thirty feet wide, exclusive of two piers, one measures thirty by thirty feet, the other thirty by twenty feet, the whole planked over,

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with convenient steps to land, at any time of tide. At low water there is about seven feet of water.

Seventeenth. South wharf, one hundred and eighty six by forty feet, gravelled over.

Nineteenth. One landing ways, north side of the island, about one hundred and fifty feet long and twelve feet wide. Several convenient boats and boatmen, for the accommodation of the physician, and those who wish to visit the island.

Twentieth. There is sixteen hundred and forty feet of picket fence, two thousand two hundred and eighty two feet of stake fence, with red cedar posts, and two hundred and fifty feet of double stone wall.

Twenty-first. There is 274 apple, pear, peach, plumb, and other fruit trees, in fine order, a great variety of grapes, currants, and shrubbery. The land improved is of a rich soil, and in a high state of cultivation.

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(B)

Memorandum of the Expenditures and Receipts of the Quarantine Department of the City of Boston.

For the year 1824:		
Expenses of Quarantine, except Salaries,	1,192 11	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
	2,542 11	
Received for Quarantine fees,	1,658 25	
Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	187 47	
	1,845 72	
Balance against the City,		696 39
For the year 1825:		
Expenses of the Quarantine, except Salaries,	1,070 02	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
	2,420 02	
Received for Quarantine fees,	1,371 00	

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Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	197 23	
	1,568 23	
Balance against the City,		851 79
For the year 1826:		
Expenses of Quarantine, except Salaries,	1,447 93	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
	2,797 93	
Received for Quarantine fees,	1,391 00	
Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	695 66	
	2,086 66	
		711 27
For the year 1827:		
Expenses of the Quarantine, except Salaries,	1,723 63	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
	3,073 63	
Received for Quarantine fees,	1,140 00	
Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	342 15	
	1,482 15	
		1,591 48

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For the year 1828:

Expenses of the Quarantine, except Salaries,	927 73	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
Building a Wharf at the Island,	1,225 00	
	3,502 73	
Received for Quarantine fees,	1,465 25	
Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	172 19	
	1,637 44	
		1,865 29

For the year 1829:

Expenses of the Quarantine, except Salaries,	1,095 01	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
Paid on account of building a cottage for the residence of the Physician,	100 00	
	2,545 01	
Received for Quarantine fees,	1,058 50	
Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	200 22	
	1,258 72	
		1,286 29

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For the year 1830:		
Expenses of the Quarantine, except Salaries,	1,498 00	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
	2,848 00	
Received for Quarantine fees,	946 00	
Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	478 20	
	1,424 20	
		1,423 80
For the year 1831:		
Expenses of the Quarantine, except Salaries,	2,472 84	
Salaries of the Island Physician and Keeper,	1,350 00	
Erection of Store Houses on the Island,	1,600 00	
	5,422 84	
Received for Quarantine fees,	2,433 00	
Of the State, for repairs of Island buildings,	279 01	
Of the State, the cost of building Stores,	1,600 00	
	4,312 01	
		1,110 83

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For the year 1832:		
Expenses of Quarantine, except Salaries,	3,672 95	
Salaries of Island Physician and Keeper,	1,550 00	
Building a Wharf at the Island,	3,009 50	
	8,232 45	
Received for Quarantine fees,	2,490 50	
		5,741 95
For the year 1833:		
Expenses of Quarantine, except Salaries,	2,773 69	
Salaries of Island Physician and Keeper,	1,550 00	
	4,323 69	
Received for Quarantine fees,	589 25	
		3,734 44
For the year 1834:		
Expenses of Quarantine, except Salaries,	2,008 12	
Salaries of Island Physician and Keeper,	1,550 00	
	3,558 12	
Received for Quarantine fees,	370 00	
		3,188 12
Total balance against the City for 11 years past,		$22,201 65

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Besides the expenditures in the foregoing statement, the City has expended, for the erection of the new Small Pox Hospital on Rainsford Island, 13,506 31
On account of which, there has been repaid by the Commonwealth, the sum of 12,000 00

Leaving a balance against the City of $1,506 31

City Auditor's Office, Feb. 17, 1835.

WM. HAYDEN, Jr. *Auditor.*

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